



SURGEON GENERAL PRIORITIES



Surgeon General Richard Carmona announced that "The Year of the Healthy Child" agenda will focus on improving the body, mind, and spirit of the growing child.

Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona has outlined his priorities for the health of individuals, and the nation as a whole. His goals are to increase disease prevention, eliminate health disparities, and strengthen public health preparedness. Woven through each of these priorities is the effort to improve health literacy. He is also committed to his 2005 year long agenda of The Year of the Healthy Child.

Increase Disease Prevention

Dr. Carmona encourages us to educate the public on how to prevent diseases. With seven out of ten Americans dying each year of a preventable chronic disease, it is imperative that we address such problems as obesity, HIV/AIDS, tobacco use, birth defects, injury and low physical activity.

Eliminate Health Disparities

Having grown up facing the difficulties of health disparities, eliminating them is of great personal importance to Dr. Carmona. The goal is to rid minority communities of the greater burden of death and disease from illnesses such as breast cancer, prostate cancer, and others.

Strengthen Public Health Preparedness

Public health preparedness is of great concern since Americans count on a strong public health system capable of meeting any emergency. The Office of the Surgeon General is investing resources to prevent, mitigate and respond to all-hazards emergencies.

Improve Health Literacy

Improving health literacy is important so that all Americans may access, understand and use health-related information and services to make good health decisions.

The Year of the Healthy Child

The Year of the Healthy Child agenda for 2005 will focus on improving the body, mind, and spirit of the growing child. In addition to pre-pregnancy, attention will be focused on prenatal care, childbirth and early childhood development. The agenda will give attention to, among other things, immunizations, childhood obesity, mental health, child abuse prevention, drug and alcohol use prevention, and safe teen driving. Also, the enthusiasm of children and teens is often overlooked, so effort will be spent to harness the energy of children and partner them with local institutions to promote volunteerism, civic responsibility, and patriotism.

To learn more about the public health priorities of the Surgeon General, please visit www.surgeongeneral.gov.



MRC CONNECTION TO THE SURGEON GENERAL PRIORITIES



Clark County (NV) MRC -
American Heart
Association Walk:
First aid tent (2004)

Housed in the Office of the Surgeon General, the Medical Reserve Corps program is in a great position to promote the priorities set forth by the Surgeon General. By supporting these efforts, the civilian, volunteer MRC program will simultaneously strengthen the health of the nation - one community at a time.

Increase Disease Prevention

By holding activities such as diabetes detection screenings and exercise programs, and by participating in government initiatives, like Steps to a HealthierUS, MRC units can promote this priority in their community, and decrease the number of people dying of preventable illnesses.

Eliminate Health Disparities

In support of this priority, MRC units can increase public awareness through programs such as Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day. Additionally, MRC units may wish to target areas within their jurisdiction which may traditionally be underserved, by supporting efforts such as health fairs, blood pressure screenings and flu shot clinics.

Strengthen Public Health Preparedness

MRC volunteers are an important resource in our public health system and developing partnerships between the MRC and law enforcement, public health, and public safety agencies at all levels of government is an important step in allowing every community to be better able to respond to emergencies. As the MRC works toward partnering with these agencies and preparing for emergencies, they are also bettering the public health infrastructure in their local community.

Improve Health Literacy

In order to address the more than 90 million Americans that do not understand basic health information, MRC units can work to increase awareness within their communities about the importance of health literacy and the challenges presented when there is a lack of knowledge concerning health issues.

The Year of the Healthy Child

By providing teens with a place to learn and volunteer within an MRC unit, sharing pre-natal health information with women, or educating young children on the importance of wearing a helmet when riding a bike, MRC volunteers will make a lasting impact on the future health of the nation by focusing attention on children today.

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